

## CHAPTER V

### CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

#### CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Mahatma Gandhi through his ideas and thoughts is still alive among the people. Although he was criticised for his ideas to be utopian and irrelevant but still there are many incidences in 21<sup>st</sup> Century which shows that he is still relevant and can prove even more important for the future generation if followed properly. Edward Thompson in his paper ‘Gandhi: A Character Study’ stated that, “he will be remembered as one of the very few who have set the stamps of an idea on an epoch. That idea is nonviolence which has drawn out powerfully the sympathy of other lands” (Edward T., 2010). Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan stated in his book that, “Since Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest moral force in Indian history. For the accomplishment of liberty, justice and peace, he rediscovered the old technique of ahimsa and Satyagrah. He revealed to the masses a power not of rifles and machine guns, but the power innate in each individual, a power which this war-haunted world can exploit fully in making wars impossible” (Radhakrishnan S., 2010). Mahatma Gandhi’s radical principle of nonviolence, non-cooperation and Satyagrah served as a major source of inspiration for people in India as well as around the world. He lived on not merely as a Mahatma, a great spiritual figure with a distinct aura of holiness about him, but perhaps even more as a radical political leader who had an epoch-making effect on the history of the material world.

#### POST-COLONIAL CRITIQUE

In view particularly of his direct role in India and wider influence abroad as the leader of the movement for anti-colonial nationalist liberation and decolonisation, Mahatma Gandhi would appear to have a valid claim to be called the father of the post-colonial world as well but there is very less mention of him in the post-colonial theory. (Trivedi H., 2011). Rather he is neglected, ignored, rejected and even criticised during this period. The eminent writers and thinkers have criticised Mahatma Gandhi on different grounds. According to the three major pillars of

postcolonial discourse i.e. Edward W. Said, Gayatri Chakroborty Spivak and Homi Bhava, Mahatma Gandhi was nowhere in E.W. Said's book *Orientalism* (1978) which was considered to be the most important work of post-colonial discourse. According to Said Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts were anti-modern and stood epistemologically outside the thematic of post-enlightenment thought i.e. beyond the pole of reason (Said W.E., 1993, p.262). The main reason behind the absence of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas during the post-colonial era was the dominance of Marxism. It was considered to be the Marxist era in which to conquer everything through force and violence was more relevant. Gayatri Spivak in her magnum opus, *A Critique of Post-colonial Reason* (1999), has mentioned Mahatma Gandhi only once and that too in a misinterpreted way. She tried to link Sati with Mahatma Gandhi's concept of Satyagrah by giving logic that the root in the first part of Satyagrah and sati are the same (Spivak G., 1999, p.298). This comparison was a complete misinterpretation of Gandhian Satyagrah and irrelevant as well because the same root is common to many other words as well, so it cannot be generalised. Satyagrah does not only mean hunger-strike rather it is one important form among the many forms of Satyagrah. And to say so will unjustify the vast scope of it. Adding to the negligence of Mahatma Gandhi in the post-colonial era, Homi Bhava, the third important founding trinity of post-colonial discourse did not even mentioned Mahatma Gandhi in his major work 'The Location of Culture' (1994). Bhava's politics was diametrically opposite to Mahatma Gandhi. Besides this Ania Loomba in her introductory handbook *Colonialism/Post colonialism* criticised Mahatma Gandhi's concept of nonviolence and said that it was not derived from any Indian tradition but from the writings of western thinkers like Thoreau, Tolstoy and Emmerson. His method of non-cooperation was also projected as feminist in nature because according to Ania Loomba non-cooperation contained attributes like passivity and spinning which were traditionally considered as female. Tamara Sivanandan also criticised Mahatma Gandhi by pointing to the partition of India as the biggest defeat of his political ambition for a united India. This radicalism rests on the bedrock that nearly all post-colonial discourse is essentially Marxist discourse and the corollary belief that all 'progressiveness' cannot be anything but Marxist. This is related in turn to the non-negotiable conviction that only an armed and bloody revolution, such as envisaged by Marx and his followers, can transform a social order from its very roots and thus be literally radical, and that any other nonviolent ways of effecting social change must either fail

or fall short. Mahatma Gandhi's propagation and practice of nonviolence as a cardinal principle of his political philosophy is thus seen as the very anti-thesis of the Marxist creed of violent overthrow and revolution (Trivedi H., 2011). Mahatma Gandhi did what Marxist would never have thought of doing and he succeeded in achieving his aim. During that period Frantz Fanon was another important thinker who emerged as a father figure of post-colonial discourse. Compared to Mahatma Gandhi he was given more space and importance in nearly all works of post-colonialism.

Robert J. Young was another post-colonial thinker who tried to portray Mahatma Gandhi in different perspective. He tried to show the reason behind Fanon's popularity over Mahatma Gandhi during the post-colonial era. He accorded extensive attention to Mahatma Gandhi. According to Young he was a diasporic product. He stated a positive estimate of Mahatma Gandhi in which he said that "Gandhi was the most extraordinary phenomena of unique history...much of the theoretical trajectory of post-colonial India took the form [interalia]...of a left politics that, while rejecting Gandhian ideology, has continued to observe some of the political forms and techniques of what were then his counter intuitive political strategies, with time they seem to become increasingly modern and relevant to radical political practices of 21<sup>st</sup> Century ...[Gandhi's] counter modernity proved to be the most modern of all those of anti-colonialist activists (Young R., 2001, p.334). In his comparative analysis of Mahatma Gandhi and Frantz Fanon he concluded that no doubt there was violence in the Indian nationalist movement, for instance Jallianwala Bagh massacre, internal violence during the partition of India and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi but as compared to Algeria there was less violence in India. In other words violence was an exception in India while in Algeria it was rule. It was because of this reason Fanon was prioritised over Mahatma Gandhi in post-colonial discourse which was predominantly an era of violence.

Mahatma Gandhi was also criticised by Aurobindo Ghosh. He believed that Gandhian concept of ahimsa was unrealistic and was not universally applicable. He never accepted Mahatma Gandhi's central idea of nonviolence and emphasis on self-suffering and self-abasement. He adopted a pragmatic non-pacifist position and said that the justification of violence depends on the specific circumstances of given situation. According to Sri Aurobindo "Purification can come by the

transformation of the impulse of violence, in that respect the old system in India was much better: the man who had the fighting spirit became the Kshatriya and then the fighting spirit was raised above the ordinary vital influence. The attempt was to spiritualise it. It succeeded in doing what passive resistance cannot and will not achieve. The Kshatriya was the man who would not allow any oppression, who would fight it out and he was the man who would not oppress anybody. That was the ideal. Gandhi's position is that he does not care to remove violence from others; he wants to observe nonviolence himself" (Kaali, 2011). He further went on to criticise the most influential weapon of Gandhian nonviolence i.e. Satyagrah. In this context he said that, "Gandhian theories are like other mental theories built on a basis of one-sided reasoning and claiming for a limited truth (that of nonviolence and passive resistance) a universality which it cannot have. Such theories will always exist so long as the mind is the main instrument of human truth-seeking. To spend energy trying to destroy such theories is of little use; if destroyed they are replaced by others equally limited and partial" (Sri Aurobindo, 1970).

Apart from Sri Aurobindo other Indian critiques of Mahatma Gandhi were Ranindra Nath Tagore, M.N. Roy, V.D. Savarkar, B.R. Ambedkar, Subhas Chandra Bose, Annie Besant, and J.L. Nehru. They criticised him on several grounds. M.N. Roy provides a Marxist critique of Mahatma Gandhi while Ambedkar evaluated Mahatma Gandhi on the basis of his conceptualisation of distributive justice that privileged the untouchables or Dalits over others. Tagore's critique of Mahatma Gandhi was perhaps the most creative response, which was both indigenous and western influenced (Chakraborty B., 2006, p. 85).

B.R. Ambedkar also provided a staunch criticism of Mahatma Gandhi. According to him Mahatma Gandhi was very rigid regarding his views towards social and religious issues. He accused him of demoralising both his followers and politics as well. He was not in favour of Gandhi's explanation of Chaturvarnya. Although Mahatma Gandhi did miss some of the social issues but that was mainly because political goal was more prior than any other thing at that time. All the above critiques missed the wider story which Mahatma Gandhi both authored and scripted.

In the previous chapter we studied about the ideas and thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi which proved to be very important and served as a beacon light to the humanity. Mahatma Gandhi has

talked about almost every aspect which is considered to be relevant nonviolent alternative even today. According to him one of the most important conditions of nonviolence is justice in every aspect of life. In order to maintain a nonviolent society it is very important to have an impartial judiciary which provide equal justice to all. The statement “Unity in diversity” defines India. India is a land of different religion, caste, language and creed living together in unity. There is both synthesis of culture and cultural diffusion. In country like this, with diversified elements there is a maximum possibility of violence, non- cooperation and mutual differences because each community, culture and caste has its different ideas, concepts and ideologies which in turn may lead to mutual discontent and strife. India is therefore a multi-cultural country having a basic social tendency for violence. For violence does not only meant bloodshed or murder rather it also included corruption, oppression and exploitation under its sphere. He believed that violence led to hatred and feeling of revenge whereas in nonviolence there was no such danger (Das D., 2012). He therefore once even quoted that, “I do not believe in shortcuts which involve violence. However much I sympathize with admire worthy motives, I am an uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest causes. There is therefore, really no meeting ground between the school of violence and myself” (quoted in Das D., 2012). He was not the founder of nonviolence rather he provided a technique of nonviolence which proved to be a boon for the entire world and humanity. But his nonviolence could not remain aloof of criticism and was criticized by various thinkers on several grounds.

The first ground upon which his nonviolence is criticized is the belief that it is passive in action. One of the reasons behind this belief could be Mahatma Gandhi’s own mistake of naming his method of nonviolence as ‘passive resistance’ but soon he realized it and rejected the term. Passive literally means accepting or allowing what happens or what others do, without active response or resistance. But this was not true about Gandhi’s nonviolent resistance. He rather pointed out three possible responses to oppression and injustice. One he described as coward’s way: to accept the wrong and run away from it. The second option was to stand and fight by force of arms which according to him was better than accepting or running away. The third way, he said was the best of all and required the most courage to stand and fight solely by nonviolent means (Shepard M., 2002).

Secondly, Mahatma Gandhi was not talking about anything new and he himself admitted it, he just provided the first technique of nonviolence which can be applied worldwide and can lead to victory. But there were some critiques that were not able to understand his point. His most bitter critiques have called him a Charlton-a deceiving malicious fraud. Others felt that Mahatma Gandhi was simply an idealistic fool, with no conception of how power works in the real world (Shepard M., 2002). They criticized his technique of civil disobedience and nonviolent struggle especially in democracy. According to them this technique of civil disobedience may lead to a situation of chaos and collapse. Some others have gone so far to diminish the value of nonviolence by praising the cleansing effect of violence when the oppressed rise up against their oppressors (Weber T., 2006). But these can be characterized as myths related to Gandhian philosophy. In order to understand these one has to look into depth the methods of Gandhian philosophy. His overall method of nonviolence was called Satyagrah which according to him was truth-force. Nowadays it is merely called nonviolence but if one tries to study Gandhi deeply will be able to understand that his nonviolence was not just a word rather it had a very broad aspect. It was for him “a way of life based on love and compassion” (Shepard M., 2002). Often Satyagrah and nonviolence is referred to as same but in reality Satyagrah is just one special form of nonviolence. His Satyagrah consisted of two major types’ i.e. civil disobedience and noncooperation. With regard to civil disobedience, in the present context it is often related to the disobedience part neglecting the civil but for Mahatma Gandhi civil was equally important as disobedience. Here by civil he meant civilized and polite. People nowadays think that civil disobedience just means breaking of law and creating chaos in an uncivilized manner but for Mahatma Gandhi it was just a way to go to the prison show his protest. The main reason behind doing so was to make a statement that, “I care so deeply about this matter that I am willing to take on the legal penalties, to sit in this prison cell, to sacrifice my freedom, in order to show how deeply I care. Because when you see the depth of my concern and how civil I am in going about this, you are bound to change your mind about me, to abandon your rigid unjust position and to let me help you to see the truth of my cause”. He actually was focusing towards converting the opponent through change of heart. But this explanation of Mahatma Gandhi can be contradicted as there was no reality in winning of the opponent through change of heart rather it was due to pressure created by public. The public put pressure on public leader to negotiate

with Mahatma Gandhi. As cycle of civil disobedience reoccur, public pressure grows stronger and finally the leaders succumb to the pressure and negotiate with Mahatma Gandhi. There is a change of heart but not in the opponent rather among the people. There was an element of coercion though it was indirect, coming from the public rather than directly from the Gandhi's camp. There was certain rule made by Mahatma Gandhi in order to follow his civil disobedience which were considered by his critiques as nonessential. But if studied with depth can actually make sense. The first rule was that only laws which were unjust will be broken, it does not aim at flouting all laws. The second rule said that only those people who had high respect and regard for law were eligible to break the law because only their action can make a difference and win respect, who understands the value of law and still breaks it. Those who have no respect for the law their participation in civil disobedience will not make any difference. The third rule says that there should be no secrecy in the act, hostile languages were banned, destruction of property was forbidden and physical blockage of anyone was restricted (Shepard M., 2002). In any case his civil disobedience was better than present understanding of it because it was completely nonviolent. The pressure was only nonviolent moral pressure and not a physical violent pressure.

The second method of Satyagrah is non-cooperation. Like civil disobedience non-cooperation was also to be practiced in a civilized manner according to Mahatma Gandhi. The core essence of non-cooperation was to show that the real power resides among the people. There may be possibilities that the tyrant try to force the people to obey him but still the power is in the hands of the people because if they are not willing to obey the tyrant they can easily withdraw their support and defeat him. In this context Mahatma Gandhi said that, "I believe that no government can exist for a single moment without the cooperation of the people, willing and forced and if people suddenly withdraw their cooperation in every detail the Government will come to a stand-still" (Shepard M., 2002). If the non-cooperation technique is practiced with firm determination and fearless attitude, it can conquer any suppression but it is hard for some to grasp it so they characterize Mahatma Gandhi as impractical and idealist.

Besides this another criticism comes from within the Gandhian clan and from other nonviolence practitioner. Only after independence and death of Mahatma Gandhi the views of Gandhian and other congress leaders changed and they thought that there was no need of Satyagrah or

nonviolent methods after independence as the country has become independent and democratic. The post Gandhian movements split on this issue. Everyone started to redefine his own vision and interpretation of Satyagrah. But according to Mahatma Gandhi Satyagrah and nonviolence was even more important to be practiced after independence due to the mounting differences among people within India.

Vinoba Bhave one of a notable follower of Mahatma Gandhi and his spiritual heir laid down his own interpretation of Satyagrah. According to him Gandhian Satyagrah need to progress as the political situation and the science progressed in time. He declared that Jesus's concept of 'resist no evil' and Mahatma Gandhi's 'nonviolent resistance' were no longer adequate and what now had to take their place was 'nonviolent assistance' in right thinking (Shah K., 1985, p. 52). Without this all that could be achieved was legislative reform, and that could never lead to total revolution. He was determined not to end where the Mahatma had found himself at several points in his life. In other words for Vinoba at times Mahatma Gandhi did not live up to his own ideals (Weber T., 2006). In his own interpretation of Satyagrah he identified four principles which were as follows-

- (i) Satyagrah is a positive method and not a negative one;
- (ii) It should proceed from gentle to gentler to gentlest;
- (iii) There should be happiness on the mere hearing of the word Satyagrah;
- (iv) Finally, there should be no insistence on the part of the Satyagrahi; insistence should come from truth itself. (Tondon V., 1980, p.387)

He further explained that with the progress of science and the creation of nuclear weapons, humanity faced ultimate destruction. In order to neutralize this force of violence and to arouse the world's conscience, Mahatma Gandhi nonviolence had to take on more subtle and finer form (Weber T., 2006). Satyagrah could no longer afford to create agitation or tension in the minds of the opponent," it had to avoid a collision of minds and seek harmony in thought. (Tondon V., 1981, p.281).

## **Gene Sharp's Criticism-**

Among other leading practitioner of nonviolence, Gene Sharp also criticized Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence to be less productive, confusing and other worldly. He argued that the nonviolent method should be more pragmatic and focus on the victory over the opponent without physical violence rather on the change of heart through conversion or in search of truth. Gene Sharp accused Gandhian nonviolence for being unrealistic. Another staunch criticism was that Mahatma Gandhi used nonviolence because that was the only option and demand of the situation. He chooses it because his force was weak and he did not have any other productive weapon. Irony of the situation is that most of the politicians and present day people think on same line and believed that they did it not to make peace, to bring change of heart or to bring unity or self-suffering but to win. But Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence is much above all this. For him Sarvodaya i.e. welfare of all and realization of self was much more important than independence. His nonviolence was more spiritual and moral which aimed at transforming the evil rather than subsiding it for a temporary period. But looking at the present scenario and the mindset of the people it can be said that Gene Sharp's method of nonviolence has become more relevant than Mahatma Gandhi's. According to Sharp, Mahatma Gandhi's language and religious symbolism were more often confusing then clarifying (Sharp G., 1979, p.2). It may cause difficulty for the westerners in evaluating his political significance. He abandoned Mahatma Gandhi and promoted his own Satyagrah rather than following Gandhian Satyagrah. He tried to make Mahatma Gandhi palatable by a process of secularization. At first he secularized Gandhi and his message so that both could be taken seriously (Weber T., 2006). His main aim was to discover a nonviolent alternative for war which was realistic and pragmatic in nature. For him Mahatma Gandhi became more like a liability then an asset. While addressing the links between Mahatma Gandhi and nonviolence he stated that Mahatma Gandhi tried to convince people who did not believe in ahimsa (nonviolence) on ethical grounds to adopt nonviolent method as a practical expedient, a technique that works" (Peace Research Abstract, 1999, p. 157). Sharp was against the moral approach of Satyagrah which emphasis conversion, rather he insisted on a technique approach. In an interview Gene Sharp said that he sees nonviolent action as "a strategy for imperfect people in an imperfect world" (Sharp G., 1997). For Gene Sharp the key feature of nonviolence is power rather than ethical principle, nonviolence is a technique by which people

who reject passivity and submission and who see struggle as essential can wage their conflict without violence. Nonviolent action is not to avoid or ignore conflict. It is one response to the problem, of how to act effectively in politics, especially how to wield power effectively (Sharp G., 1973, p. 64). He often describes nonviolence as a means of combat as is war. It involves the matching of forces and the waging of battles, it requires wise strategy and tactics, employ numerous weapons and demands its soldiers courage, discipline and sacrifice (Sharp G., 1990, p.37). It is an alternative weapon system where the central dynamic is one of “political jiu-jitsu” rather than the “moral jiu-jitsu” of Mahatma Gandhi. (Gregg R., 1934). According to Sharp accepting or adopting nonviolence as an ethical principle “ignores the social reality in which we must operate.” As long as violent sanctions are accepted, violence cannot be removed from political societies by “witnessing against it or denouncing it on moral grounds” (this is what he seems to have reduced Gandhian principled nonviolence to). He states that, first, nonviolence must reach the position where it is seen as an alternative form of sanction, and “once that major changeover has been completed,” or at least “well under way,” then people can “consider and deal with the finer ethical problems which arise in the application of nonviolent sanctions” (Sharp G., 1980, p. 395-96). This view of Gene Sharp appeared to the Gandhians as negative and pragmatic. For Mahatma Gandhi the main aim was achievement of self-realization and major principle was unity among people and the entire humanity. People are related to each other that in way is transcendental in nature and conflict should be seen as a gift providing of rich opportunity, potentially to the benefit of all, to realize a higher self. A desired outcome of conflict, in this line of argument, is nothing sort of a creation of new social structure and a higher level of self-purification in both actors (Galtung J., 1992).

According to Gandhian practice, conflict stems from unmet needs and in order for needs to be met they must first be understood, and this requires true self-awareness. For Gandhi the discovery of ‘Self’ was the primary task of life. In short, conducting conflict in what can be termed a Gandhian, as opposed to a Sharpian, context may not only be instrumentally valuable but may be intrinsically important in an existential sense. In Gandhi’s vision, Satyagraha was not only a useful technique for the resolution of conflicts, and the Satyagrahi was far more than a mere practitioner of a certain skill. The Satyagrahi was the embodiment of an ideal and the Satyagrahi lifestyle was the lifestyle worth living. Sharp does not emphasize the potential

positively transformative effect of nonviolent action (for example in terms of empowerment, openness, participation, gaining of skills) on either the activists themselves or on others, more or less limiting its use to a tool for achieving extrinsic goals (Martin B. & Varney W., 2003). Thus deep analysis of both Gene Sharp and Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence shows that although the method was same but their interpretation was different. Gene Sharp mainly focused on the social and political freedom whereas Mahatma Gandhi's main focus was on search for truth. According to Hayes, this means that in "a theoretical-practical sense, Gandhi's ideal can be seen to be directly aimed at addressing many of the existential effects of being dominated and of being a dominator" and "what nonviolent actors might be or become as a result of their struggle" ( Hayes M., 1995). One of the friend of Gene Sharp pointed that in the comparison of Mahatma Gandhi's and Gene sharp's nonviolence, Sharp tries to promote his nonviolence in a highly acquisitive capitalist society in a practical manner whereas Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence aimed at pursuing merely personal redemption and not any kind or social or societal change. But ultimately whether nonviolence should be Gandhian or pragmatic like Sharp's depends completely upon the understanding of individual practitioner of nonviolence.

### **FEMENIST CRITIQUE OF GANDHIAN NONVIOLENCE**

Mahatma Gandhi was criticised by the feminist for his principle of self-suffering. As according to some feminist critique it was not at all true that self-suffering brings conversion on the part of opponent rather it is evident from the past history that women had been suffering throughout their life but there was no change of heart among the oppressor. They further said that Mahatma Gandhi was able to do what he wanted to do because the British were fair, and if he would have done same thing in Germany or Soviet Union or any other Totalitarian state, he would have been killed by Nazi or Stalin or other any other dictator. The feminist have the view that the theory of power on which Mahatma Gandhi and other nonviolent theorist found their activism is inherently problematic. The claim is that the withdrawal of consent is not as easy as implied by these theorists because in our society power is patriarchal and it excludes women (McGuinness K., 1993). It is often seen that women are projected as sacrificing martyr-just same as what they have been expected to do from very long. Other feminists often argue that women's liberation and world peace are complexly linked. Some state quite plainly that woman must move from a

negative analysis of women's oppression to a more positive future-building perspective and this means whole-hearted engagement in peace work. Some go even further, arguing that the rising consciousness of women is critically important in trying to conceptualize an understanding of the causes of peacelessness. They claim that women's own actions and reflections can provide an understanding of violence and a way of bringing about social transformation with a vision of a different future – and this gives women a particular role in working for a peaceful future – in other words peace and non-violent activism are clearly feminist issues. (McAlester P., 1982).

## **MARXIST CRITIQUE**

Marxists have often criticised Gandhian nonviolence as futile and incapable of bringing any real change in the society. According to them Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence prevented a revolution which could have reordered the society. With his preaching of Satyagrah he ensured that the powerful remain in their position of power. The capitalist bank rolled him and he in effect rewarded them and they took over as another repressive class when the British left. Mahatma Gandhi in short was a lackey of the bourgeoisie according to Marxist (Weber T., 2006). George Orwell takes this line of argument even further. He claims that the British imperialists themselves saw Gandhi as their right-hand man. He made it easier for them to rule because he used his influence to make sure that no action was taken which would make a real difference. The British always treated Gandhi well in prison because they did not want him to die and perhaps be replaced by someone who believed less in "soul force" and more in bombs. They may have hated him for what he did – raising the masses, but now they needed him for what he was doing – keeping those masses in control (Orwell G., 1970, p.111). The Marxist critique saw Gandhi as a politician operating within the confines of a narrow vision of power politics. Mahatma Gandhi's larger spiritual vision is irrelevant or incomprehensible to this form of analysis (Weber T., 2006). Both Gandhian and Marxist thinkers advocated their own method to resolve the conflict between the capitalist and the bourgeois and uplift the downtrodden. But the difference was that Marxist view was based on violence whereas Gandhian view was based on love, nonviolence and greater understanding. The basic aim of the Satyagrah movement is to educate the masses and made them conscious of their exploitation, prepare them into a broad

front, provide them with a powerful organization and finally lead them in their struggle against the exploiters. Once the masses realize their strength and become conscious of their exploitation, they would certainly revolt against the existing social order. Though Marx and Gandhi wanted an egalitarian society social order, they differed in their method of approach to the realisation of their ideal society. For Marx the ideal society is the ‘communist society’ and for Gandhi it is ‘Ramrajya’ (Kar P.K., 2014). Mahatma Gandhi’s Ramrajya stood for an egalitarian, nonviolent and democratic social order, where in moral values pervade all spheres of human life. Politically it is form of stateless society; socially it is a form of classless society where all persons are equally treated irrespective of caste, colour, religion, sex etc. and economically it is a form of socialist society in which inequalities based on possession and non-possession vanish because all wealth belongs to the society as a whole (Kar P.K., 2014). One important Marxist critique came from Rajani Palme Dutt, who saw Mahatma Gandhi as the supporter of Bourgeois class. According to her the methods of Mahatma Gandhi were not as altruistic as they appeared to be. The landed labours were dissatisfied with the bourgeois class and the Rowlact Act added fuel to the fire. There was widespread unrest and strikes throughout the country. She was of the opinion that Mahatma Gandhi constructed and utilized the method of nonviolent non-cooperation to stop the civil unrest because the members of Congress, the bourgeois were worried about the violent protest of masses against them. Another major Marxist criticism came from M.N. Roy. He criticised Mahatma Gandhi’s idea of Swaraj which he considered to be a failure because according to him the time is gone when the people could be inspired by the vague promises of Swaraj. He also criticised his idea of constructive programme as he felt that it was basically verbal and inadequate for India’s economic salvation. He predicted that the Indian Nationalist movement based on nonviolence is bound to fail and that it will fall victim to its own contradictions. He was critical of Mahatma Gandhi’s idea of nonviolence and Satyagrah because he felt that it was politically restrictive. For Roy nonviolence was a cloak “to serve the interest of those who have built castles of social privilege and economic exploitation. If the end of nationalism is to glorify the privileged few, then nonviolence is certainly useful; but to nationalism of a broader kind, which is the expression of the desire of entire Indian people, it is a positive hindrance” but despite all criticism it can be said that M.N. Roy failed to understand the cultural power of Mahatma Gandhi and his ability to fashion weapons of political struggle out of

unorthodox material. This led him to misconstrue, what in retrospect was the strength of Mahatma Gandhi's politics. If we look into the present scenario we can find that compared to 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 21<sup>st</sup> Century is less violent; people are realizing the importance of nonviolence and trying to adopt it in a positive way. Though it is not fully successful but a thorough analysis of these aspects by every individual can help in establishing a nonviolent society.

Another criticism which coils around Gandhian nonviolence is that it worked fine only in India and cannot make sense to use anywhere else. According to the critiques it is so because nonviolence is inbuilt in India's religious culture and so Indians are habituated to it. They believe that there are certain limited conditions to follow the nonviolent attitude which are fulfilled only in India, not elsewhere. This is actually a kind of myth related to this approach and it shows the narrow vision of the critiques. Deep study of the influence on Mahatma Gandhi shows that he first was inspired by the New Testament (The Sermon on the Mount) and later found similar ideas in the Hindu scriptures. Infact nonviolent idea is much more practiced and suitable outside India. In no way it is easy to ignore the examples of Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Steve Jobs, Barack Obama Albert Einstein, Aung San Suu Kyi, the solidarity movement in Poland, overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos in Phillipines, the Orange Revolution, The Umbrella Revolution and many more.

The critique also confront that nonviolent methods can work only against easy enemies like British and not against the tyrant regime of Hitler, Nazi, Stalin or Central American dictators. But this view can also be confronted as there are cases where nonviolent action has been successful against all these rulers as well. Some of the best examples are cited in Gene Sharp's magnum opus 'The Politics of Nonviolent Action'. For instance in 1968, Czechoslovakian civilians nonviolently held Soviet Armed forces at the bay for a full week and stopped the Soviet leaders from ever subjugating that country to the degree they had intended. In 1944, military dictators were ousted nonviolently in both El Salvador and Guatemala. During World War II Norway nonviolently and successfully rejected Nazi's attempt to recognise its society along fascist lines, etc. (Shepard M., 2002). Interesting fact is that even today in many cases people who know nothing about Gandhi adopt nonviolent struggle based on Gandhian Satyagrah. It can

be said that it comes naturally to them and Mahatma Gandhi himself once stated that nonviolence is inherent in human being and it is not always necessary to teach them.

Other criticism regarding Gandhi's nonviolence is that it is very slow and difficult for people to adopt who are starving, suffering from injustice, slavery and social, political and economic difference. Thus in order to get rid of all these maladies the quickest way is to resort to violence. If we look into the history we can find cases which show that even violent revolutions are long and do not achieve swift victory. For instance, the Vietnam War, the Chinese Revolution, etc. In contrast to this nonviolent method followed in Philippines to dethrone Marcos took only three years. So it will not be justifiable to say that violent method is quick and nonviolent slow. It is just that nonviolent act requires more patience and courage. Mahatma Gandhi once stated that nonviolence is a tree of slow growth; it grows imperfectly but surely (Barua R., 2008). Theodore Razak once commented on the impatience of these critiques. He said that, people try nonviolence for a week and when it doesn't work, they go back to violence which hasn't worked for centuries (Shepard M., 2002). Through this statement he tries to show that even though violence leads to victory in some cases but it comes with numerous side effects, and nonviolence at the same time avoid these side effects. But this does not mean that there will be no violence in the nonviolent protest, as there are possibilities that the opponent may act violently. As it was seen during the Indian Independence Struggle, many people were killed. But if we compare it with a violent struggle the ratio is no doubt very less. Another benefit of nonviolent struggle is that it ends in peace and benefit of both the sides. As it can be noticed during the independence struggle, the British left as friends and both became partner in the British Commonwealth. It will not totally be correct to say that India due to nonviolent struggle has become paradise, there are many problems like widespread injustice, corruption, civil violence and authoritarian trend, but still it cannot be denied that it is the longest running democracy without any military domination even once. So it is up to people to analyze what is practical, violence or nonviolence.

Apart from this nonviolence is also criticised for being old fashioned. According to the critiques the village centred approach of Mahatma Gandhi led to the backwardness of Indian society. They see him and his nonviolence as socially reactionary rather than politically reactionary (Weber T, 2006).

### **Howard Ryan Criticism-**

He is one of the staunchest critiques of Mahatma Gandhi and provides a very elaborate criticism of him in his book *Critique of Nonviolent Politics: From Gandhi to Anti-Nuclear Movement*. He said that nonviolence theory is a hindrance in the work of many activities. Ryan in this book tried to defend violence in place of nonviolence and provided several examples for justification of his point. He further says that there has been large misinterpretation of successful nonviolent struggle by their supporters. For example Gene Sharp cited the incidence of undermining of military coups in Germany by a nonviolent general strike in 1920 but in reality that struggle was an armed workers uprising which was brutally suppressed and led to the rise of Nazism in Germany. Another misleading example was given by George Lakey and Patricia Parkman where they describe the downfall of El Salvador's General, Martinez in 1944 due to a nonviolent revolt of unarmed civilians. But this was a limited victory for nonviolence, as military rule simply continued with different faces. Upon leaving the country, Martinez placed the presidency in the hands of his trusted minister of war, General Ignacio Menendez. He was followed by a succession of other military leaders who had also served under Martinez (Ryan H. 2002). In present history some of the nonviolent writers have claimed that 1979 overthrow of the Shah of Iran was mainly due to nonviolent protest and tried to justify the possibilities of bringing about social change through nonviolence. But in reality the nonviolent revolution in Iran replaced one repressive and tyrannical regime with the other. Thus the nonviolence can work best only where the government cannot sustain pressure but in other cases where the government is tyrannical and attack the nonviolent campaigners and beat and demoralise them, then the supporters either discontinue or adopt violent self-defence. In India's Struggle for independence itself Mahatma Gandhi was regularly disappointed as the masses were unable to maintain nonviolent discipline in the face of government brutality (Ryan H., 2002). It is very difficult to analyse which method is better because both the believer of nonviolence and violence tries to seek the ultimate truth to determine once and for all whether violence or nonviolence is the better way. But the ultimate truth is that what is needed depend upon the circumstances. Movement strategies should derive from the study of actual condition, and not from easy maxims such as "violence begets violence" "nonviolence begets violence" or this method gets more casualties, that method gets less

causalities. The method that begets the least violence, in the long run is the best suited to the situation (Ryan H., 2002, p. 20).

He further lays down the limitation of nonviolent voluntary suffering in the constitutional democracies as well. In the US Civil Rights Movement Martin Luther King's emphasis on retaliatory-suffering and love for one's enemies had little attraction for lower-class blacks, particularly those in Northern Ghettos. Manning Marbles observes that the riots and Black power slogans which rose in the mid-sixties were signs that king's nonviolent tactics has began to lose appeal. "Young black students in SNCC (Students Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) and even some of King's oldest followers were tired of going to jail, being abused and shot" (Marble M., 1980, p. 56).

**The Contradictory Legacy of Gandhian Nonviolence-** Jawahar Lal Nehru although being the disciple of Mahatma Gandhi criticised him and his nonviolent methods. With regard to the achievement of Gandhian nonviolent technique Nehru aptly wrote that, "It is not because of Gandhi's nonviolence or economic theories, that he has become the foremost and most outstanding among India's leaders. To the vast majority of India's people he is the symbol of India determined to be free of militant nationalism, of a refusal to submit to arrogant might, of never agreeing to anything involving national dishonour" (Nehru J.L., 1948, P. 108). According to Nehru the nonviolent principle of Mahatma Gandhi put a limitation on the popular movements to some extent. Besides this it will not truly be correct to say that Indian independence was completely the result of Gandhian nonviolence. Rather it was the mass post-war upheaval, agitation for release of Indian National Army prisoners, peasants and workers revolt, military mutiny, communal strife combined with Britain's weakened capacity as an international power after the war which actually pushed Britain against the wall and convinced them to surrender power. The post-war protest were carried on independently and often without leadership of either Gandhi or the Congress and those activities include violence and arms (Ryan H., 2002). Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence was criticised of serving the interest of Bourgeoisie nationalism. Lack of any popular movement on the part of Mahatma Gandhi throughout the 1940's weakened the national leaders to fight the partition of India. It also left lower class Hindus and Muslims

with no constructive way to vent their anger. The massive butchery that followed, the millions of dislocated people, the severe economic havoc caused by partition, the subsequent Pakistan-India wars over Kashmir and other issues must all be taken into account in evaluating Gandhi's nonviolent politics because the only class which benefitted was the Upper class (Ryan H., 2002). For some commitment to nonviolence grows out of a religious conviction. For others it comes from careful considerations of a vision for the future and a path to reach it from where we are today. The choice of a nonviolent way of life is a personal one. As the anti-nuclear movement in United States have largely adopted the nonviolent methods and therefore it is important that what we mean by nonviolence is fully understood by all and is consistently carried on (Livermore Action Group, 1983).

Gandhi has been accused that his nonviolent methods cannot fight the war. Dave Dellinger warns us against the success of nonviolence in a war and especially a war which is nuclear in nature. He asserts that nonviolence is currently incapable of resolving the problems with which mankind is faced today (Dellinger D., 1965). But the fact is that the greatest problem of mankind today is violence which is increasing rapidly and day by day. This kind of violent act cannot be treated with equal violence or else it will end the world. So the only option seems to be relevant is nonviolence. But it can become successful only if it is adopted as a creed, as it was by Mahatma Gandhi and not just as a mere strategy or technique.

## **CONCLUDING ANALYSIS**

Mahatma Gandhi's concept of nonviolence whether relevant or irrelevant is the most important topic of research and discussion nowadays. As far as relevance of any idea or a man is concerned, it can have many aspects. It can be immediate or remote, it can be local, regional or general, and it can be personally relevant to some or universally for all. But in the case of Mahatma Gandhi all these aspect of relevance can be studied with profit. Once Martin Luther King was asked a question that Where is Gandhi today? We see him nowhere. He gave a very profound answer. He said that Mahatma Gandhi is inevitable. If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable. He lived thought and acted inspired by the vision of a humanity evolving towards a world of peace and harmony. We may ignore him only at our own risk (Diwakar R.R., 1967)

Gandhian philosophy is basically about synthesizing and integrating both inner and outer and matter and spirit together. He always emphasized on accumulating the good from everywhere be it from any religion, cast, class, community or country. He never tried to impose his ideas on others and always provided enough space for every individual to make his own decision. In this context he once quoted that, “As I have all along believed that what is possible for one is possible for all, my experiments have not been conducted in the closet... I am far from claiming any finality or infallibility about my conclusions... I hope and pray that no one will regard the advice interspersed in my writings as authoritative. The experiments narrated should be regarded as illustrations, in the light of which every one may carry on his own experiments according to his own inclination and capacity.... I am not going either to conceal or understate any ugly things that must be told. I hope to acquaint the reader fully with all my faults and errors. My purpose is to describe experiments in the science of Satyagraha, not to say how good I am.... Let hundreds like me perish, but let truth prevail. Let us not reduce the standard of truth even by a hair's breadth for judging erring mortals like myself (Gandhi M.K., 1932). His life work and ideas are not only restricted to historical or bookish record rather it has the ability and capacity to deal with the new challenges and adverse situation. One can say that his entire life was an enlightenment and inspiration for others. It was because of this Jawaharlal Nehru said immediately after his death that, “The light is gone and it will shine for a thousand years”. These words of Nehru seems to be very true and prophetic as now also we can see that his message of life is shining like a bright star and showing path to many who are lost in the worldly distress (Diwakar R.R., 1967). Mahatma Gandhi was an exceptional personality and it is quite difficult to cover all aspects of his teachings and its relevance. But still there are some aspects which can be discussed and are of great importance for the humanity today, for instance his concept of nonviolence. Therefore, in the previous chapter I have tried to discuss few aspects which Mahatma Gandhi propagated and can be of significance today. According to him nonviolence could be progressive only through service to others, self-suffering and if needed total sacrifice.

There are several grounds upon which conflict can take place in India. Among these the four prominent grounds for conflict are cast, language, religion and class. Caste which conflates two Indian words i.e. Jaati and Varna are the constant reason of conflict. Jaati is the group in which

one is born and Varna is the place that group occupies in the social set up of the society. There is a constant conflict among the lower and the upper ones. Secondly language, national unity and lingual diversity can never be compatible with each other. The Constitution of India has declared 22 official languages. Although Hindi is spoken by a large majority of India's population, but there are many native languages as well which are spoken by a large majority and they are against accepting Hindi as their national language. So there is continuous conflict among Indians speaking different languages. Thirdly, religion which was the base of politics for Mahatma Gandhi has now become an important reason for conflict in India. India is a multi-religious country apart from Hindus it also consist a vast majority of Muslims and other communities like Christian, Sikhs, Buddhist and Jains etc. each following their own belief and faith. So there are often quarrels on worshiping of different God and following different cultures. One of the most important incidents portraying these rifts was the Babri-Masjid demolition case. The fourth one is Class. Due to vast economical gap only one fourth of Indian population is rich and the other three-fourth are starving and suffering with poverty. There are large scales inequalities in the matter of property distribution, income, living standard, etc. There is discrimination made on the basis of caste and gender as well. All these have led to a never ending gap between the upper class and the lower class and have infuriated many movements of opposition and conflict.

The partition led to worsen the situation and assassination of Mahatma Gandhi added fuel to the fire. There were large scale communal riots all over the country. Nehru the successor of Mahatma Gandhi did not seem to follow any ideal of Mahatma Gandhi. The successors rejected much more of him then they adopted. The biggest mistake done by those leaders was that they thought that nonviolence was not needed after independence and so they abandoned it. But in reality, nonviolence was needed more after independence then before, because of vast differences within the country on several issues. Apart from this Congress under the leadership of Nehru adopted Capitalism and promoted industrialization for nation-building. Mahatma Gandhi was completely against this concept. This industrialization has led to the crumbling of old values and institutions. The greedy and power-hungry approach is destroying the vitality of the nation. For personal and short-term benefit several political parties and government officials are flaming the communal issues in the country and dividing them on the name of caste, creed,

religion, etc. The Godhra Kand in Gujarat, the Babri Masjid demolition case in Ayodhya are some of the examples of these activities. It is highly misunderstood by the post-independence thinkers that Gandhi's thoughts and ideas of nonviolence were only applicable to fight against British Raj. With this misconception they build a nation which was poverty-stricken, traditional, divided and essentially agrarian. His ideas on economic, politics, religion and social reform were considered to be unrealistic and irrelevant. But this was a complete misconception of Gandhian philosophy. His political philosophy was a fusion of individualism, idealism, and socialism and the key words of his economic and social programme were self-sufficiency, non-cooperation, equitable distribution and decentralized production. Although he incarnated India's traditional ideal of saint, but on the other hand he belonged to the most modern type of mass leader. As the unique contribution of him lays not in the fact that he discovered new truth but that he applied old and eternal truth for the solution of modern problems. Through his theory of nonviolence and Satyagrah he tried to provide solutions for all economic and social problems (Behuria R., 2010, p. 46). According to K.S. Bharathi, "he did not cast his views in clear-cut rigid, logical categories but made suggestions to solve immediate problems. Gandhism is not a finished and closed system of thought. It can adjust itself to the demands of the times. The great merit of Gandhism is that being a synthetic and comprehensive system of social and political philosophy it can incorporate newer element from other kindred systems of thought. It is not a system of dogmatic, closed, scholastic political thought. It reinforces the valuational and teleological approach to politics. Mahatma Gandhi's political philosophy makes an appeal to the values of the human personality in an age when the dignity, worth and sacrosanct character of man has been and might again be rudely and savagely attacked by the extraneous might of the weapons of mass destruction" (Bharathi K.S., 1998, p.30). His philosophy has touched almost all aspects of life and gives a very clear indication of love and respect for every individual and national freedom as well. As Gandhi is a vast area so it is difficult to cover almost all aspects of his theories. So, I have tried to show his relevance by pointing out at one of his most important theory i.e. theory of nonviolence.

## CHANGING TRENDS OF GANDHIAN NONVIOLENCE IN INDIA

Nonviolence means love and respect for all and doing good to all. Gandhian nonviolence included love and good-will not only towards human beings but also towards environment and the entire universe as well. According to Mahatma Gandhi it is not the weapon of a weak and coward rather it is the greatest charity, largest love and require great strength and will power. But in present scenario it is often taken granted for. There is a tendency among people that violence can be the only way to solve rigid problem and even nonviolence has the tendency to turn violent and strike back. Besides this other usual conceptions about nonviolent Satyagrah are that it is followed only by the idealist and nowadays there is hardly any place for idealism. Democracy and humanity has almost become a myth. In the world where practicality rules, the long process of Satyagrah is difficult to adhere due to impatient nature of human beings. Materialistic and greedy lifestyle has made people self-centered and possessive. This possessiveness has increased to the extent that people nowadays not only seek to possess material goods but also try to possess peace and spiritual belief if possible. In order to portray the misconception of man regarding peace, Arun Gandhi discussed a very interesting story narrated by his grandfather Mahatma Gandhi, in his article entitled “Nonviolence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Challenges and Choices”. The story is as follows;

“There was an ancient Indian King who was obsessed with the desire to find the meaning of peace. What is peace and how can we get it and when we find it what should we do with it were some of the issues that bothered him. Intellectuals in his kingdom were invited to answer the King's questions for a handsome reward. Many tried but none could explain how to find peace and what to do with it. At last someone said the King ought to consult the sage who lived just outside the borders of his Kingdom: “He is an old man and very wise,” the King was told. “If anyone can answer your questions he can. “The King went to the sage and posed the eternal question. Without a word the sage went into the kitchen and brought a grain of wheat to the King. “In this you will find the answer to your question,” the Sage said as he placed the grain of wheat in the King's outstretched palm. Puzzled but unwilling to admit his ignorance the King clutched the grain of wheat and returned to his palace. He locked the precious grain in a tiny gold box and placed the box in his safe. Each morning, upon waking, the King would open the box

and look at the grain to seek an answer but could find nothing. Weeks later another sage, passing through, stopped to meet the King who eagerly invited him to resolve his dilemma. The King explained how he had asked the eternal question and this sage gave him a grain of wheat instead. “I have been looking for an answer every morning but I find nothing.” The Sage said: “It is quite simple, your honor. Just as this grain represents nourishment for the body, peace represents nourishment for the soul. Now, if you keep this grain locked up in a gold box it will eventually perish without providing nourishment or multiplying. However, if it is allowed to interact with the elements- light, water, air, soil - it will flourish, multiply and soon you would have a whole field of wheat which will nourish not only you but so many others. This is the meaning of peace. It must nourish your soul and the souls of others; it must multiply by interacting with the elements” (Gandhi A., 2004). This story focused on the real essence of Gandhian nonviolence and pursuit of truth. It also shows that how today world is trapped in the web of materialistic illusions, jealousy, possessiveness, infertile competition, etc.

But gradually people have started to realize the importance of nonviolence. Although India has lost her soul but her spirit lives and that spirit will continue to live among us as long as India survives (Singhvi L.M., Pai M.R., Ramakrishnan S., 1999). According to the news received from Geneva, “53 Nobel Prize winners of the world have issued a joint statement after observing the rapidly changing conditions in the world. In this statement they say: The underlying factor in the widespread restlessness in man today is the condition of the world today. If any change has to be effected in it, then there is only one way open to human beings - and that is civil disobedience with the sole stipulation that basic human rights are kept in view. The political and economic policies of today are responsible for thrusting crores of people into hunger and death. The rich and powerful people of the world are the most responsible for this state of affairs. But they are not the only ones. If the helpless people decide to guide their own destiny and more and more persons do not obey other rule except the fundamental right of living and use the weapon of non-violent conflict wielded by Gandhi for his own demands, then it is certain that we shall be free from this calamity before our own eyes” (Lok Swarajya, 1981).

There are several examples in India where most of the conflicts and revolution are settled by the non-violent methods and peaceful means. Many of the extremist movements seem to be moving

towards the alternative of violence that is non-violent means. The secessionist movement or the fight for separate state like Telangana movement in Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand movement for a separate state in Bihar, Uttrakhand movement in the state of Uttar Pradesh, the movement for Khalishta in Punjab, etc. have also to some extent adopted Gandhian methods. In March 2000 the central government initiated one more step in nonviolence by suspending Para-military and police operation against BLT (Bodo Liberation Tigers). The ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam) which was banned by the Indian Government for being a terrorist group are also showing their interest in settling the problems peacefully. A tripartite agreement for Suspension of Operations (SoO) against ULFA was signed between the Indian government, the Assam government and the ULFA (The Hindu, 2011). Many of the militants including women surrendered to the Government. The government is also trying to settle many of the inter-state conflicts through peace and nonviolence as well. For instance Belgaum border dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra, Punjab – Haryana conflict over Chandigarh, conflict between Gujarat and Maharashtra, etc. Similarly water disputes like the Kavery Water dispute in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala, Ravi water dispute in the states of Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, Krishna River dispute in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka etc.

Apart from this a new kind of movement known as New Social Movement has come into existence which is mostly based on nonviolent methods. The two central claims of New Social Movement theory is that firstly, the new social movement are the result of the rise of the post-industrial economy and secondly, the new social movements are significantly different from the early social movements which took place in the industrialized economy. The main difference is regarding the goals as the old social movements focused more on the materialistic qualities such as economic wellbeing, profit, etc. whereas the new social movements focus more on human rights and environmental issues. These movements includes the Ecology movement, Women's movement, Peace movements, Gay rights movements. According to Hebermas the new social movements are the 'new politics' which is about quality of life, individual self- realization and human rights whereas the old politics focus on economic, political, and military security (Charles N., 2002). In other words, the contemporary social movements are rejections of the materialistic orientation of consumerism in capitalist society by questioning the modern idea that links the pursuit of happiness and success closely to growth, progress and increased productivity and by

promoting alternative values and understanding in relation to social order. As an example, the environmentalist movement that has appeared since the late 1960's throughout the world, has significantly brought about a dramatic reversal in the ways we consider the relationship between economy, nature and society (Castells M.,2004). Some of the most prominent movements in India are Narmada Bachao Aandolan, Chipko Movement, Appiko Movement, Koel-Karo movement, Jhola Aandolan, Chattisgarh Mukti Morcha, Save Silent Valley, Save Kudre-Mukh, Swadhayay movement, Lok-Satta movement, Karnataka Rajaya Raitha Sangh, etc. All these movements draw their inspiration from the Gandhian ideology and try to move their protest in peaceful and nonviolent way. This clearly shows the relevance of Gandhian nonviolent methods. The most recent one among the social movements is the Anti-Corruption Movement led by Anna Hazare along with other social activists like Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi. Anna Hazare, a strong follower of Mahatma Gandhi sat on a fast unto death to fight against corruption and demand of enacting the long pending Jan Lok Pal Bill. This movement was highly popularized and got support from both masses and the media. It was a landmark in the history of constitution of independent India. It succeeded in forcing the government to include five non-official members in the drafting committee which usually consist of only ministers. Although the enactment of law will take some more time but the movement certainly mobilized the masses on the issue of corruption. Thus it is clearly visible that nonviolence has become more and more acceptable in different matters and for solving different issues. But still the real essence of Gandhian nonviolence is missing in all the cases. Although most of the new social movements are held on the ground of nonviolence but still they involve cases of violence and coercion. This is mainly due to the adamant and corruptive nature of government and people. It is not the principle which has become irrelevant but the impatient nature of man and the fast growing necessities which has made corruption so popular. For these burning issues violence can never be an appropriate answer. The need of the hour is to promote mutual understanding and shut-down the egoistic and selfish attitude. In this situation nonviolence can be the best force if practiced properly. M.N. Roy once quoted that, "When a man really wants freedom and to live in a democratic society, he may not be able to free the whole world...but he can to a large extent atleast free himself by behaving as a rational and moral being, and if he can do this, others around him can do the same

and these again will spread freedom by their example” and if that is the goal, then Gandhi is more relevant than ever” (Sharma S. 2011)

There is plethora of literature on the relevance of Gandhian ideology and his methods of nonviolence. Writers have discussed about the relevant ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and their application in various new movements in India but very little light is thrown on whether these movements based on Gandhian nonviolence are following the real essence of it. In today’s world a tendency has grown among people to worship and adhered the philosophies of eminent leaders only on their birth or death anniversaries and then forget their teachings very conveniently. After the release of a famous movie Lage Raho Munnabhai in the year 2006, to claim to be a true Gandhian has almost become a fashion in India. Every political party whether Leftist or Rightist, Secular or Communal, Democratic or Despot, acclaims to be a true follower of Mahatma Gandhi and does not forget to say daily to his comrades and colleagues that India can progress only by Gandhian means. It hardly matters whether he himself knows or follows them or not. The political leaders pledge at his Samadhi to serve the country. Some even plan to wash the Samadhi with the Holy Ganga water. His name is included in every manifesto etc. It is said that when a man dies his influence begins to show. While in the world at large there is some evidence of this, there is example of Martin Luther King – but the irony of Gandhi’s fate is that in his own country the river appeared to have dried (Kumar A., 2000). Despite of several movements going on a nonviolent ideology a long way has to be covered.

Mahatma Gandhi always thought that politics bereft of religion is of no worth and has no soul so it should not be separated. But when he saw that communalist were using religion to ignite hatred and violence against followers of other religion, he completely changed his formulation and said in 1942 that, “Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics”. After the communal holocaust of 1946-47 he became even more categorical and said that, “Religion is the personal affair of each individual. It must not be mixed up with politics in national affairs” (Behuria R.2010). By addressing to the synthesis of politics and religion he meant that they should have a moral foundation in Dharma. He was not rigid with regard to his teachings. He never said that his ideas or thoughts were complete and provides a packaged solution to any problem rather he himself kept on experimenting with different issues. His

teachings never cease to grow. In this context he once said that, “I wish to tell scholars & other friends who are interested in my writings that I do not care to appear consistent for all time to come. In search of truth, I have gotten rid of many of my beliefs and have learnt many new things. I may have aged but my internal growth has not ceased. And for that matter, I don’t think that the process will stop even after my physical body withers away. I am concerned about only one thing and that is to follow the truth at any moment. So, if anyone feels that there is contradiction in my writing, then take the later version as the authentic version, if the person concerned has faith in my wisdom” (Bhatt A., 2011). But nowadays power hungry politicians have misinterpreted his views and used religion as a tool to increase their vote bank and create tensions among people for their personal benefits. By doing this they are losing the real essence of Gandhian nonviolent philosophy.

Regarding caste and untouchability also Mahatma Gandhi has often been misunderstood and misinterpreted. A famous socialist thinker Arundhati Roy criticised Mahatma Gandhi for being Castist and racist. But this shows the misinterpreted truth about Gandhi’s thinking. In one of his prayer meeting at Sewagram on April 30, 1936 he stated that, “I can only try to persuade you to shed the ideas on caste and untouchability”. He further said that “Separate electorate to the Untouchables will ensure the bondage and perpetuity” (Behuria, R., 2010, p. 42). He actually wanted to provide equal status and justice to the untouchables and other lower cast people by uniting them. But his action was misinterpreted and people thought that he was against the upliftment of poor and downtrodden. As a result of which now there is separate electorate for untouchables and Muslims and even other caste and communities are also demanding for same. This has led to loss of unity and identity crisis among people.

Apart from this Mahatma Gandhi is often criticised on the ground that by rejecting industrialization and modernization he tried to slow the pace of country and make it futile. But this is not the reality; no doubt Mahatma Gandhi was against the materialistic and inhuman industrialization, he was not against machines. There are many loopholes in today’s corporate world which is harmful both for the people and the environment as well. He emphasized credible alternatives which the proponents of the present day corporate values assiduously seek to strengthen. Some of the principles Gandhi believed are of paramount importance are as follows:

1. Against the multiplication of wants, Gandhi suggested limitation of wants.
2. Instead of diffusion of large scale technology, Gandhi was in favour of large scale technology in few sectors co-existing with small scale technology and handicrafts in others.
3. Against mass production, Gandhi favoured production by the masses and small scale production except in a few sectors where mass production is unavoidable.
4. Gandhi was not in favour of centralization of economic power. He favoured limited state ownership, wide-spread village ownership and trusteeship.
5. Rapid urbanization did not find favour with Gandhi. He advocated self-governing village republics, self-sufficient in basic needs.
6. Inequality of all types particularly in wages, social justice and in gender reflects where there is denial of natural justice according to Gandhi.
7. As against increasing specialization, Gandhi favoured universal physical labour.

(Radhakrishnan N., 2003) All these points are enough to prove that he was a revolutionary thinker and was in no way responsible for emasculating India. It is the people of India who are not able to match up to the standards of Mahatma Gandhi. So it will not be correct to blame him for everything.

Regarding 'individual' Mahatma Gandhi unlike post-colonial thinkers like Marx, Durkehim and Cooley, etc. believed that individual is completely free even if he is the member of any society. In this context he stated that, "No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom" (Gandhi, M.K., 1942). So he sees the individual as the subject rather than the object of history and he firmly believes that the relationship between the individual and society is one of the parts determining the whole (Weber T., 1991). Mahatma Gandhi's social philosophy consists both of an enriched society and free individual because changes in social conditions depend upon changes in the hearts and characters of man and women which begin, obviously, at the individual level (Weber T., 1991). But at the same time he also believed that it is difficult for an ordinary individual to change the society, so he should be trained in the principle of truth and nonviolence.

This aspect of Gandhi thought is missing in today's scenario. Nowadays individual has just become a part of the society and due to overpowering of feelings like hatred, jealousy, ignorance, etc. they are not able to set them free and get enlightened by the principle of truth and nonviolence. And even if an individual tries to take his/her stand he/she does not get the support of other individual who are bereft of truth and nonviolence.

A relevant case justifying this argument is that of Irom Chanu Sharmila, who is also known as the 'Iron Lady' of Manipur. She is one of the civil right activists following the Gandhian principle of nonviolent Satyagrah. She began a hunger strike on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2000, which is still ongoing to protest against AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Power Act). In the year 2000, ten civilians were shot dead by the Assam Rifles (Indian Parliamentary Force). The incident was known as 'Malom Massacre'. The people shot in that massacre were innocent people and in order to protest their death Irom started a hunger-strike. Since then she has been arrested and rearrested time and again on the ground of attempting suicide. But all this could not deviate her from her stand. She was approached by many political parties to contest election, but she denied all offers and continued with her fast. She got worldwide attention, and was given many awards regarding her long running Satyagrah. For instance in the year 2010 she won a lifetime achievement award by the Asian Human Rights Commission. In the later year she won the Rabindranath Tagore Peace Prize. Amnesty International declared her as a 'Prisoner of Conscience'. But despite all these she has not succeeded in achieving her goal of repealing AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Power Act) from Assam. Here the question arises that why is it so that even if most of the politicians and several groups, are aware of her struggle and demand, are not able to support her or fulfill her demand? Another question which shoots out of this scenario is that whether present day nonviolent Satyagrah is only confined to group Satyagrah, thus ignoring the individual efforts? Irom Sharmila who has been struggling since past 13 years, following the Gandhian principle of Individual Satyagrah has not been able to get justice yet; rather she is often arrested for committing suicide, which in reality is her nonviolent way of showing protest against the government. This case also reveals the partial face of Indian media. As almost every

individual of the country knows about Mr. Anna Hazare and his Satyagrah but only very few handful of people know about Irom Sharmila and her peaceful protest. It is not that only the middle class of Delhi needs change, the people of Manipur also needs it who are going through the atrocities in their daily life. Irom Sharmila is a true Gandhian who is just demanding the normalcy of life in Manipur. So it is a matter of debate that what are the reasons behind the failure of her protest?

### **FUTURE OF GANDHIAN NONVIOLENCE IN INDIA**

As far as India is concerned despite of corruption, injustice, poverty, and internal difference it is considered to be world's largest and longest running democracy with independent judiciary, free press and significant civil liberty. The government after independence promised economic growth for eradicating poverty and brings in equality but it failed to do so. Thus the Gandhian movements came in forefront to give political voice to these vast unvoiced masses. Therefore still the essence of Gandhian Satyagrah is found in the movements organized by different nonviolent organizations or the people affected by state injustice against the government to express their grievances.

Mahatma Gandhi offered a credible non-violent alternative. In other words he challenged all those who scoffed at him and his nonviolent principles and paved the way for a new civilization to emerge. It now depends upon the individual and the country to learn lessons from his teachings and shape the destiny of the country. Few steps can be taken in this regard. Firstly, emphasis on truth, truth is one of the most important aspects for an effective nonviolent scenario. If truth is rejected and an illusionary view of the world predominates every judgment as is the case in India today, no doubt nonviolence will be rejected or misinterpreted. The failure is not on the part of Mahatma Gandhi and his principles rather it is on the part of politicians who ofcourse pay lip service to him but do not miss a single opportunity to dishonor his advice. Just to have a name of Mahatma Gandhi and honour him on his birth and death anniversary does not imply that the party, group or the individual is Gandhian. The rise of the Naxalite movement in Northern India which according to our former Prime Minister Mr. Manmohan Singh is greatest threat for

internal security is the result of dishonoring the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. According to one incident when the new minister of Bengal government went to seek the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi, “he told them that they had been tested during the British regime, but in a way it has been no test at all. But now there will be no end to your being tested. Do not fall prey to the lure of wealth. May God help you! You are there to serve the villages and the poor” (Guha R., 2009). But the politicians betrayed him at every step. They abandoned the villages and the poor and developed an economic policy which focuses more on urban-industrialized sector, neglected agriculture, small-scale industries and more intensively primary education. They concentrated more on strengthening and enriching themselves instead of enriching and strengthening the country and the poor, which in return led to the development of severe internal disturbances and overgrowth of poverty and unemployment. Therefore, it is very necessary to find the reality of the social and political image of the system of the country, because the biggest enemy of nonviolence is inability or lack of reality check. Day by day the modern world is becoming complex and situation complicating, so it has become very difficult for a man to find out truth through his common sense or by numinous insight. Thus in order to perform the reality test of socio-political image of the system it is necessary that the methods of social science provide samplings which are more delicate and quantitative, and there should be adequate processing of information. In this complex world the problem of truth has become so difficult that it is almost impossible to ignore it and neglect the means of improving the path towards it because in absence of it nonviolence will be exasperated. Therefore, the logical step for preserving the Gandhian nonviolence should be in the direction of social science, in reality testing and peace research.

Secondly, role of media, for Mahatma Gandhi the main role of media was to serve the people. He therefore quoted in his autobiography that, “The sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countryside and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within” (Gandhi M.K. 1927). Media plays an important role in mobilising and influencing the masses. India which is

facing lot of challenge due to globalization needs to have a continuous democratic development to cope up with the existing situation. In this context the media which is consider being the mirror of society, has a strong responsibility of maintaining the socio-economic condition. Nowadays due to rampant corruption, lack of transparency, and commercialization of the political action media has lost its essence and is not able to live upto the ideal expectation. It has become puppet in the hands of politicians. More often it is also used as a proxy in the battle between the rival political groups, in the process sowing divisiveness rather than consensus, hate speech instead of sober debate, and suspicion rather than social trust which in some sense is contributing to democratic decay. (Coronel S., 2003). So it is the duty of media to understand its responsibilities and instead of showing only news related to violent activities and entertainment, it should also show news relating to the success of nonviolent activities and popularize self-sufficient villages like Ankapur and Ralegan Siddhi, so that other villages can also take benefit from them. The youth which has become ignorant can also be mobilized by media by organizing several debates and discussion on relevant issues.

Thirdly, the education system should be revised and include one subject related to the Gandhian principles. In recent news the HRD Minister, Mrs. Smriti Irani wants ancient books to be included in the syllabus to inculcate feeling of nationalism among children. But nationalism to be understood in proper sense needs a study of Mahatma Gandhi and his nonviolent principles as well. The younger generation has great misconception about Gandhi. They believe that Gandhian Satyagrah has lost its importance. There are certain factors relating to Gandhi which the younger generation would not accept like rigid code of behavior and too much emphasis on celibacy. It is often seen that if we study some great thinker we study usually the positive aspect of him. But in order to develop a rational and logical thinking it is very necessary that a logical analysis should also be focused upon. Mahatma Gandhi himself once said that there may be possibility that what I say now may differ with my future saying and the reason behind this was his rational and experimental thinking. So to catch hold of a random point of his life and to term it Gandhian Philosophy is dangerous. This is where the so called Gandhian has gone wrong.

Fourthly, adoption of Techno-Gandhian Philosophy (TGP). In a fast changing world where people are facing various socio-political difficulties in their personal as well as professional life, the Techno Gandhian Philosophy propounded by Balamurali Balaji can be an answer to all these problems. It was formulated with a rule of resolving the convoluted conditions that provides a way for defining a career and personal identity of one's life and with the passage of time it has become a science of life and developed into a moral code of living in a fast paced life. It has been adopted by many corporate structures to bring humanistic environment and resolve issues rationally. Mahatma Gandhi's ideas are relevant in solving day to day crisis situation because they were realistic and empirical. The central theme of the Techno-Gandhian Philosophy revolves mainly around the quandary and management of using the technology alongside the moral values, the qualities and attributes as preached by Gandhi which is perfectly suitable (Balaji Balamurli, 2010). Today the world is trapped in the web of technology which seems almost impossible to break. It is also leading to mental and physical deterioration of man. In this context Balamurli Balaji stated that one should not completely repudiate technology rather he/she should go with the technology according to one's need and necessity and also carry values alongside on a regular basis and not for an hour or on weekends. He emphasised on the use of Gandhian principles like Sarvodaya, simplicity, Swadeshi, Swaraj, serenity and truth. According to him there are five core rules of Techno-Gandhian Philosophy which can be followed by anyone in the complex society. It included; firstly, not to shy with the technology and living with traditional values; secondly, TGP propagated for leading mainly simple, yet, balanced life within the complex structure of life; thirdly, TGP is not for implementing in a particular stage of life rather it is to be practiced throughout the life; fourthly, it is about pursuing a give-and-take policy of trade between the technology and moral values in one's life; fifthly, it is neither religious nor political both in theoretical and practical sense. Application of this philosophy can bring a great change in the daily life. He therefore, suggested for using only those technologies which is not for pleasure but meeting the needs, which does not cut down our physical activity and affect our psychological attitude and which does not transform our image and identity in the society. (Balaji

Balamurli, 2010). Thus if this concept of TGP is adopted in real sense it can solve many socio-political problems as it is suitable for both rich and poor. It may first appear to be difficult to adopt but if we see Mahatma Gandhi, he was also an ordinary man who only through his firm determination and conviction reached to an unparalleled position, so why cannot we? It is just a matter of thought and firm determination.

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